



Experience life in full bloom

Volunteer Guide

Thank you for volunteering to care for the Richmond Rose Garden! Your time and energy will help preserve one of the most beautiful places in Richmond, Indiana!

History

The Rose Garden was opened to the public in 1987 after three years of planning. It was inspired by the Zweibrucken Garden in Germany and brought to life by a group of dedicated citizens who wished to showcase Richmond's rose history. Their efforts resulted in the splendid garden we have today. The Richmond Rose Garden is maintained by dedicated volunteers and is financed by contributions, fundraising activities, grants, and memorial gifts.

Adopt a Plot

When you volunteer to help at the Richmond Rose Garden, you will have the opportunity to work side-by-side with other volunteers who love to share their knowledge and rose-tending skills. Later, you may choose to be responsible for your own plot where you can experience the enormous satisfaction of watching the roses in your bed flourish under your care.

Rose Garden Board Meetings

The Richmond Rose Garden Board of Directors meets at noon on the fourth Tuesday of every month from February through November. All volunteers are invited and encouraged to attend these meetings. The Board reviews upcoming events, like weddings and tours in the garden, as well as schedules for fertilizing, mulching, planting, and spraying.

Skills and Tools Needed

People of all levels of gardening skills, from beginner to master gardeners, are welcome to work in the garden. You'll need simple tools:

- Sharp pruning shears
- Good gardening gloves, preferably leather to protect against thorns
- Garden spade
- Small bucket for collecting weeds and spent blooms

How to Care for Your Garden Plot

Caring for the Rose Garden is a year-round activity. The following is a summary of the work that is typically done during the season.

Early Spring

This is the time of year to “wake up” the garden. The Board designates a clean-up day, usually sometime in April depending on the status of the Spring weather. You can come any time, but on clean-up day you will be joined by other volunteers who can offer advice and answer questions. You will perform three major tasks:

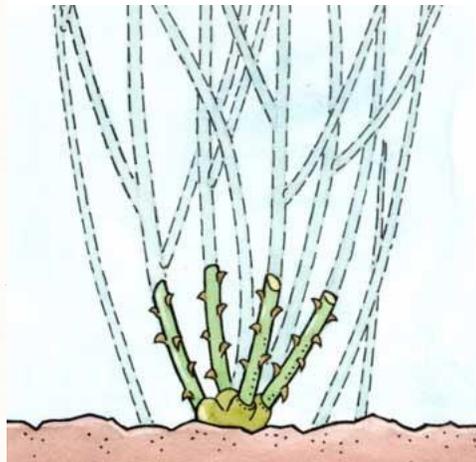
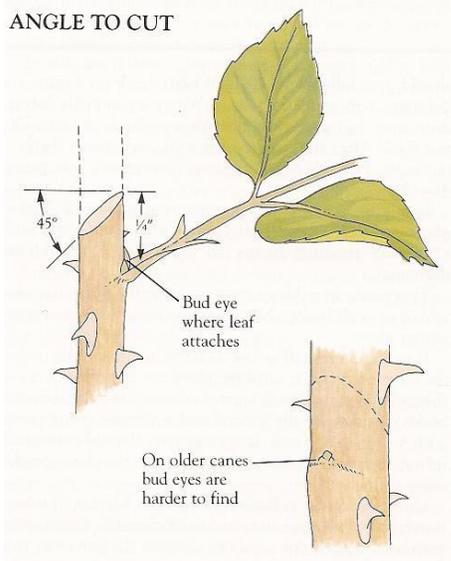
- Gently pull back the mulch from the base of the rose plant so as not to damage new shoots. A ¼” diameter wooden dowel works well.
- Remove weeds.
- Prune the rose bushes of old, dead canes.



TIP - How do you “prune” roses?

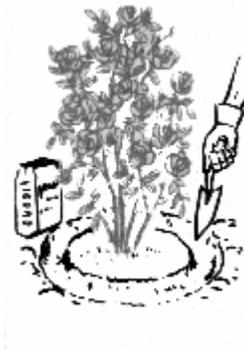
- Cut at a 45-degree angle about 1/4 inch above outward-facing bud. The cut should slant away from the bud. This allows rainwater to run off the cut surface rather than pooling and creating an incubator for fungal diseases.
- Entirely remove all dead or dying canes. These can be identified as canes that are shriveled, dark brown, or black.
- Remove crossing and rubbing canes and open up the center of the plant for good air circulation.

ANGLE TO CUT



Spring

After the chance of frost has passed, fertilize the rose bushes. Fertilizer is furnished by the Board and is usually stored in the area where the Rosie Rollers are located. Pull back the mulch from around the trunk of the rose bush. The fertilizer should be scattered in a ring about 10" from the trunk, commonly called the "drip line," and scratched lightly into the soil. Use ½ to 1 cup of dry fertilizer for each plant, more for the landscape roses.



Mulching will also take place during this time. Mulch provides weed control and moisture retention. The mulch should be about 2 inches thick throughout the beds, covering the irrigation hoses as well.

Around May 15, the garden comes to life with annuals that are delivered by the Richmond Park Department. The Board designates a day to plant annuals around the perimeter of the beds. They should be uniformly spaced about eight inches apart, or about every other brick. Also, new roses may be planted during this time or earlier. See the attached Instructions for Planting New Roses in the Garden.

Summer

This is the most beautiful time in the garden, especially when all the rose bushes are in their first blooms of the season! During this time of year, you'll be working independently in the garden to maintain the health of your roses. These are the ongoing activities you'll be performing:

- Weed control. Weeds are most easily removed following a light summer rain when the ground is moist.
- Fertilizing. Continue to apply fertilizer as directed by the Volunteer Coordinator during the peak blooming months, but not after mid-August.
- Deadheading. Roses are deadheaded in order to prompt the bush into producing yet more blooms. The blooms should be deadheaded just as the petals are about to fall or shortly thereafter. (See the "Tip" that follows.)

- Remove any dead or diseased leaves from the canes. You'll want to pay particular attention to leaves exhibiting "black spot" disease. (See the photo below.) These leaves should be removed from the rose bush and discarded into the Rosie Rollers. Do NOT let the diseased leaves remain on the ground near the roses as this will further spread the disease to the healthy plants.



- Also be on the lookout for Japanese beetles that tend to appear in the Garden mid-summer. The beetles feed on the rose leaves creating a lacy pattern that destroys the leaf. The beetles should be removed by hand and placed in a bucket of soapy water or another container to remove them from the Garden. There is no known treatment for Japanese beetles other than physical removal.



😊 TIP - What is "deadheading"?

Once a rose has bloomed, it should be removed, and the term applied to this procedure is called "deadheading". One should use pruning shears that are sharp in order to avoid tearing the cane as opposed to cutting it. Cuts should also be made at a 45-degree angle and about 1/4" above a leaf set. Leaf clusters on roses either come 3, 5 or 7 leaves to a set. The first deadheading of the season will likely be made just above a 3-leaf set. Future deadheadings will usually take place just above a 5-leaf set, usually because you'll find many more 5-leaf sets than 3 or 7. For landscape roses, the spent bloom should be removed at the base of the bloom stem to avoid removing new growth.



Fall

Continue to control weeds, but deadheading is usually discontinued in late September or October to prepare the rose plants for their upcoming dormant time.

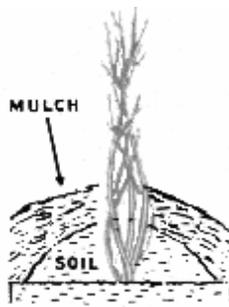
Late Fall

At this time there will have been a “hard” or “killing” frost. It’s now safe to “put the garden to bed.” Again, the Board will determine a “clean-up” day for the following activities:

- Remove dead annuals.
- Mulch the rose bushes to prevent winter damage to the base of the plant. Mulch will be provided by the Rose Garden Board on specified work days.
- Some experts suggest cutting back the rose canes at this time while others suggest waiting until the following spring. We have found that Fall works best for the Garden.



TIP - Mulch should be mounded around the tender crown of the rose and packed sufficiently tight to remove air pockets.



Winter

Enjoy some time off and help plan for next season! Regular board meetings resume in February.

Other Information:

- All plots in the Rose Garden are serviced by a central irrigation system. Volunteers must assure that the hoses in your plot are below the mulch and are positioned around the roses. The irrigation system is on a timer and will automatically water your plot. If you see any breaks or leaks in the system, please contact a Board member. When penetrating the ground with a sharp tool either for planting new roses or annuals, be sure no hoses are damaged in the process.
- An outside firm has been hired to spray the roses to prevent black spot. Please make sure you know which day of the week this will occur so you can avoid working in the garden for at least an hour after the application. A flag at the entrance to the Garden will indicate that spraying has recently been done.
- Please deposit all your garden waste in the “Rosy Rollers” located in the garden. The rollers can be emptied behind the shed near the visitor parking lot.
- All “clean-up” or “work” days designated by the Board are usually scheduled on Fridays or Saturdays.
- The Richmond Rose Garden is privileged to have Star bricks in the walks surrounding the rose plots. These bricks have a rich heritage in Richmond and have been in the sidewalks of some of Richmond’s historic neighborhoods for almost 100 years. The South walkway of the garden has been designated as a tribute walkway. Here you will find personalized bricks that have been purchased by donors in honor of someone special.

All volunteers in the garden take special pride in assuring this walkway stays clean and clear of weeds in tribute to those who are honored by the bricks.



Thank you for joining the Richmond Rose Garden Volunteers!



Instruction for Planting New Roses in the Garden

1. Put about 1/3 of a bag of organic material (Holy Cow) into the bottom of the hole that has been dug for the rose.
2. Remove the rose plant and planting medium from the pot. Set the pot aside for recycling.
3. Lower the plant into the hole and adjust the amount of organic material, so that the crown of the plant is at ground level.
4. Backfill around the plant using the blackest part of the soil removed from the hole. This is the most organic part of the soil and is best for the plant.
5. Vigorously tamp the soil around the base of the plant. Use your foot if necessary to achieve the necessary firmness.
6. Soak the base of the plant with water. (Avoid watering the leaves as that would promote fungus growth.)
7. Fertilize the rose with about 2-4 fl. ounces of granular fertilizer, around the dripline of the plant.
8. Replace mulch around the plant to within 4-6 inches of the crown.
9. Continue to heavily water the base of the plant weekly for the next 4-6 weeks depending on the amount of rain received. This is about the length of time required for the plant root system to get established.